

CD 2006--105/106

Electroacoustic
Music



Saturday December 2nd
2pm Walter Hall.
Free

John Cage - *Radio Music*
University of Toronto electronic ensemble

Akemi Akachi - surround piece

James Fulkerson - *Antiphonies and Streams*
Jessica Reese, trombone

Monica Clorey - surround piece

Matt Cooper - *to forgive but not forget*
Patricia Chung, violin

Amin Honarmand - surround piece

Christopher Thornborrow - surround piece

Charles Dodge - *Any Resemblance Is Purely Coincidental*
Daniel Richter, Piano

_ INTERMISSION _

Qi Yang - *New work for live electronics*
Qi Yang, electronics

Hiroki Tsurumoto - surround piece

Avalon Rusk - *Choices*
Avalon Rusk - electronics, Jessica Reese, Trombone, Ian Feenstra,
Tuba, Patricia Chung, Violin

Liya Huang - surround piece

Jonathan Harvey - *Still*
Ian Feenstra, Tuba

Mark Nerenberg - surround piece

Conor Brown - *Looprovisé*
Conor Brown, electric guitar

Antiphonies and Streams (1978) by James Fulkerson (1945-)

Performed By Jessica Reese (trombone) and Ian Feenestra (electronics)

American composer James Fulkerson musical studies focused around both trombone performance and composition. During that time he studied with some of the most prolific trombonists such as Edward Kleinhammer, Donald Reinhart, and Carmine Caruso, and composers like Kenneth Gaburo, Ben Johnson and Herbert Brun. Fulkerson then went on to work as a composer-performer with many university institutions such as the Centre for the Creative and Performing Arts-State University of New York (Buffalo), Dartington College of the Arts (Devon), Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (Berlin). In the early 1970's Fulkerson was working in Europe, this uniquely was the height and most fruitful period of electroacoustic music. It was during this time that *Antiphonies and Streams* was composed and Fulkerson established himself as composer of new music.

Antiphonies and Streams is an exploration into sound: how it is created, interrelates and eventually destroys itself. Fulkerson makes use of the traditional definition of antiphony, which is an "artistic form of auditory communication incorporating instrumental or vocal tones in a structured and continuous manner". Thus the performer is given a coordinative system (in essence an electronic instrument) to interact with and explore the properties of sound. The performer is asked to start from nothing and slowly add more sounds be it pitches, attacks or other various manipulation (like muting). Then the system takes the given sound of the trombone and transforms it by feeding it through a long series of delay, reverberation, and sine wave generator. The sound is transformed and it creates various voices and streams that stack upon one another or cancel each other out. By doing Fulkerson is able to create dialogue between the original sound and the transformed sound. *Antiphonies and Streams* culminates in the gradual increase of sound volume until the original trombone sounds are indistinguishable from the other voices created by the coordinative system.

The production of my piece, *Loopprovisé* (Looping and Improvising), requires an electric guitar to run through a digital delay unit, a live looper and a wah wah pedal (in that order) before being amplified. The delay is kept on for the entire piece and therefore every note that is played in the piece is heard with delay. The live looping unit I am using for this piece allows me to record up to 14 seconds at once (I only ever use about half that time), and also allows me to record an infinite amount of samples that can be layered. In this piece, the final loop has 4 different recorded parts layered on top of each other. This particular looping unit (Line 6 Delay Modeler) has a special feature that allows me to play the loop at half speed, which enables much more creativity within the loop. The wah wah pedal can be used to "wah" the loop, thereby acting as a filter for the piece. I chose to use footswitches and hardware for the production of this piece because as a guitarist and solo performer, I want to have complete control over my sound, so the pedals and switches give me a connection with how my sound changes and allows me to do everything by myself. On the other hand, this presents a serious challenge because this piece depends on perfect timing and synchronization with the guitar and footswitches, and thus in addition to playing the piece on the guitar, I must also act as a technician in looping and changing effects. I wrote this piece in accordance with my hardware capabilities, and I also left a lot of room for improvisation between loop sampling. As a classical guitarist, I am not the greatest improviser, so I thought this would be a good opportunity for not only performing a solo work for electric guitar, but also for testing my improvisation skills. This piece gives me the freedom to improvise not only with the guitar, but with the hardware as well.

Choices is a two movement work written for recorded electronic music and live musicians. In the 1950's, in contrast with earlier music, composers began to create a new kind of music - studio realizations recorded on magnetic tape. Not long after, compositions were written for tape in combination with traditional instruments. A recent trend in electronic music is to electronically manipulate the sound of acoustic instruments by various methods of signal processing. *Choices* combines all these methods; much of the music is realized in the studio in advance of the performance, there are live instrumentalists, and the sounds they make are fed into a computer on stage to be manipulated digitally.

I began to work on *Choices* when I started noticing how frequently people make their decisions based on which option is the easiest or has the highest odds of success. In my experience, basing major decisions in one's life on ease or probability and not on what would bring us the most happiness inevitably leads to dissatisfaction. This tendency in decision-making is most noticeable with people make career decisions, particularly what career one should pursue in life. When one considers careers they would really like or that they feel it is in them to do, if these careers are perceived as unlikely or difficult to succeed at, these options are often eventually discarded in favour of a career with better odds for success.

Both movements begin in exactly the same way, with the same musical question posed and a different answer returned by each movement. The first movement symbolizes a choice made for the wrong reasons and their resultant consequences while the second represents a choice based on the desire for happiness over expediency. Throughout the work, passages of the instrumentalists' scores are often not written out explicitly, instead featuring a string of musical notes that they choose to create musical phrases from. In the first movement, this tends to produce a fair amount of cacophony and in the second, more lyrical and singing phrases. In this way, every performance of *Choices* is different, with the performers making many of their own individual choices throughout.